

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-05 NSCE-00 L-03 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 SSO-00
INRE-00 /059 W
-----104590 141754Z /41

O R 141731Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4125
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE
CINCUSAFE IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR
HQ 3AF RAF MILDENHALL

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 04088

DEFENSE FOR OASD/FMR, ISA, PA: CSAF FOR 01 AND XO

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK NATO MPOL MILI
SUBJECT: RAF GREENHAM COMMON

REF: A) LONDON 3906; B) LONDON 3571; C) LONDON 3020

1. I AM INCREASINGLY CONCERNED THAT WE WILL BE UNABLE TO OBTAIN UK ACQUIESCENCE IN THE REACTIVATION OF THE RAF GREENHAM COMMON BASE FOR KC-135 DEPLOYMENT.
 2. MICHAEL HOLTON, HEAD DS-8 IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND ONE OF THE KEY OFFICIALS IN DEVELOPING HMG'S PROGRAM IN SUPPORT OF GREENHAM COMMON, TELLS US THAT THE REACTIVATION PROPOSAL HAS STIRRED UP MORE PUBLIC SENTIMENT THAN HMG HAD ANTICIPATED, AND THAT IN HIS PERSONAL VIEW MINISTRIES WOULD FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO APPROVE THE REACTIVATION. HE DID NOT SUGGEST THAT WE SHOULD NOT
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PRESS OUR CASE FOR REACTIVATION, BUT WANTED TO LET US KNOW THAT WE OUGHT TO START TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY OTHER ALTERNATIVE SITES. MOREOVER, HE SAID THAT IT MAY NOT BE WORTH THE COST IN PUBLIC RELATIONS TERMS TO PURSUE GREENHAM COMMON IN VIEW OF THE ADVERSE IMPACT A PUBLIC HUE AND CRY ON THAT BASE COULD HAVE ON OTHER BASING ARRANGEMENTS SOUGHT BY THE US.

3. WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING AT THE EMBASSY FIFTEEN TO TWENTY LETTERS A DAY OPPOSED TO THE GREENHAM COMMON REACTIVATION AND MICHAEL MCNAIR-WILSON, MP FOR NEWBURY, HAS BEEN SPEARHEADING A MAJOR CAMPAIGN AGAINST ACTIVATION AND IS NOW CIRCULATING A PETITION ON WHICH HE SAYS HE EXPECTS TWENTY THOUSAND SIGNATURES. WHILE HIS EXPECTATIONS MAY BE EXAGGERATED, NEVERTHELESS HIS VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN APPEARS TO BE HAVING AN IMPACT ON HMG THINKING ABOUT THE ISSUE.

4. MICHAEL MCNAIR-WILSON PLANS TO CALL ON ME MARCH 21 AND I WILL HEAR HIM OUT WITHOUT COMMENT BECAUSE, AS I HAVE TOLD HIM IN A LETTER, THIS ISSUE IS STILL UNDER STUDY BY HMG, TO WHICH WE HAVE FURNISHED ALL PERTINENT FACTS.

5. HOWEVER, THE EFFORTS BY THE MOD TO DEFEND THE KC-135 DEPLOYMENT ARE BEING HAMPERED SIGNIFICANTLY BY WASHINGTON'S FAILURE TO DATE TO PROVIDE THE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED REFTELS. LACK OF THIS INFORMATION HAS DELAYED MINISTERIAL DECISIONS ON THE ISSUE, THUS ALLOWING MORE TIME FOR ADVERSE PUBLIC SENTIMENT TO BUILD UP. MOREOVER, THE MOD HAS BEEN UNABLE, IN THE ABSENCE OF SWERS TO THE QUESTIONS, TO RESPOND TO PARLIAMENTARY AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS.
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6. WITH OFFICIALS AT SENIOR LEVELS OF THE MOD SUGGESTING THAT WE CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO GREENHAM COMMON AND WITH THE RISING PUBLIC SENTIMENT WE NOW FACE, I SEE NO WAY IN WHICH WE CAN REASONABLY EXPECT TO SUSTAIN THE POSSIBILITY OF GREENHAM COMMON DEPLOYMENTS WITHOUT AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE MOD'S REQUEST FOR ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS IT HAS POSED. HMG PATIENCE IS GROWING THIN AND WE MAY HAVE OURSELVES TO BLAME FOR FAILURE TO ACHIEVE THE DEPLOYMENT IF WE CANNOT GIVE THEM THE HELP THEY NEED.

BREWSTER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
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